

**Draft
Environmental Assessment**

**CLARK'S LOOKOUT STATE PARK
ROAD PAVING**

April 20, 2003



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

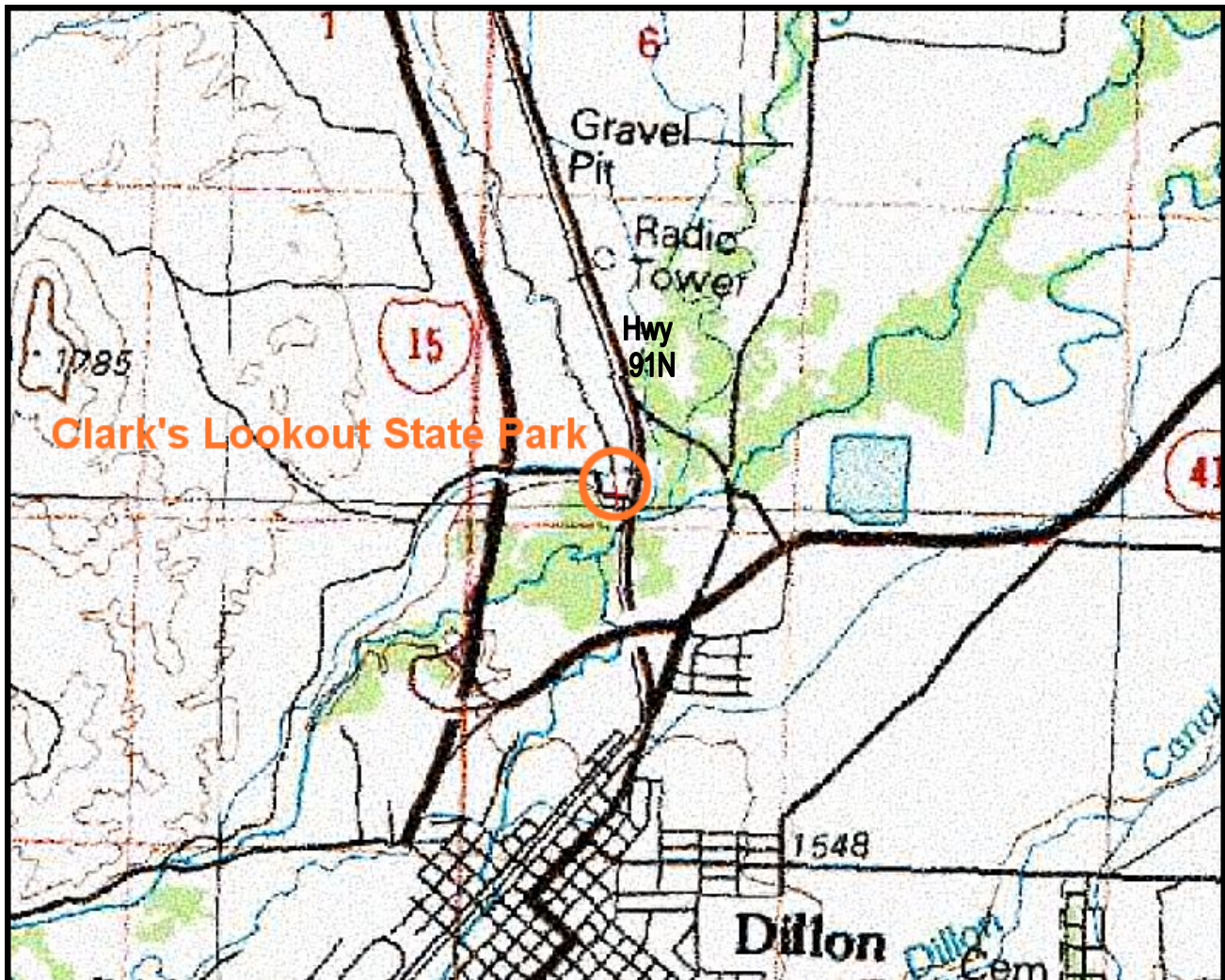
Clark's Lookout State Park Road Paving Draft Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

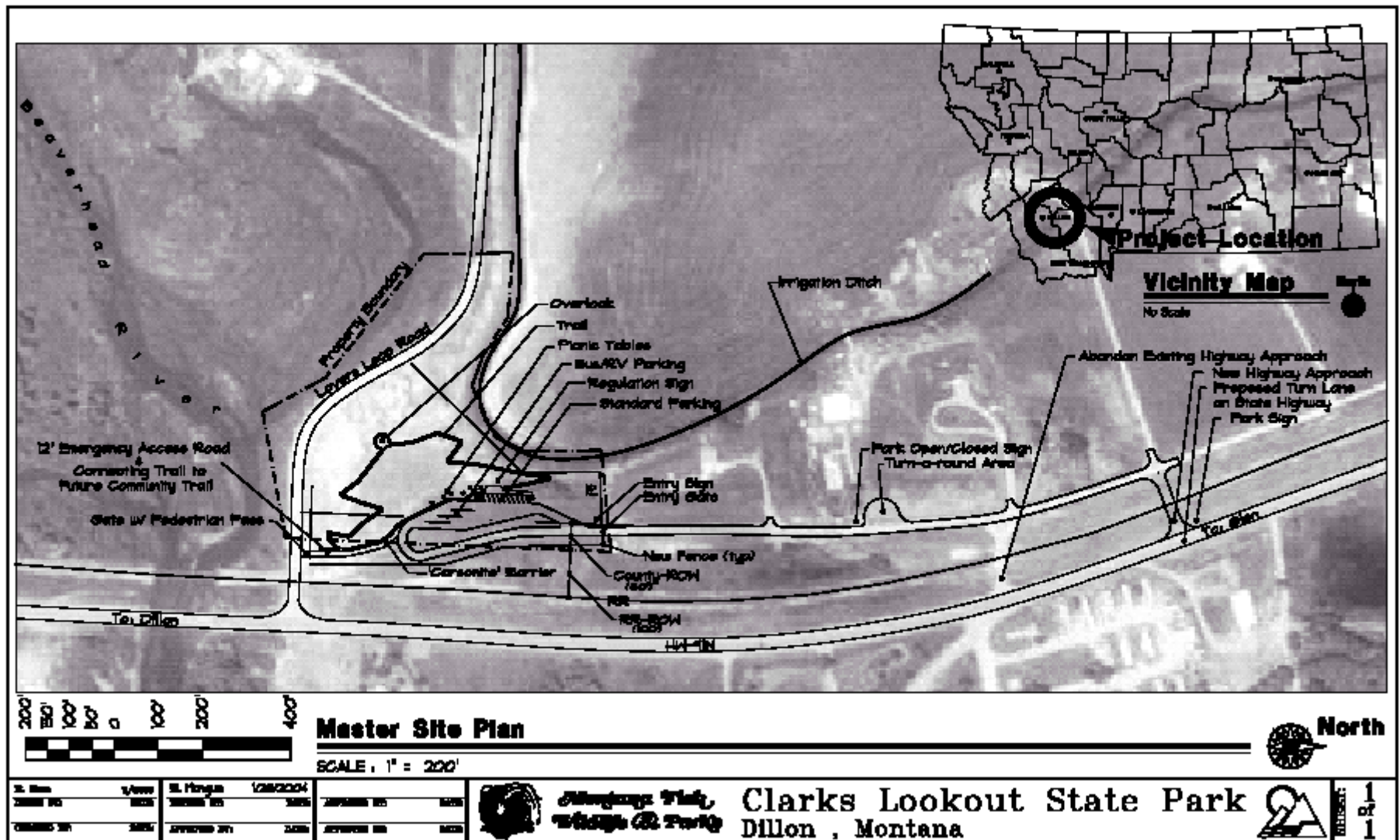
1. **Type of proposed state action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) proposes to pave Clark's Lookout State Park interior loop road system including parking areas and contribute funding to Beaverhead County to pave approximately one-quarter mile of Lover's Leap Road North from Highway 91 North to the park entrance.
2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** MFWP is vested with the purpose and authority to plan and develop outdoor recreational resources in the state as determined in MCA 23-2-101. MCA 23-1-104 and 23-1-104 authorize the construction, improvement and maintenance of roads between existing state highways and state parks and the cooperation between state and local agencies for these purposes. The opportunity for public involvement regarding the proposed park project is provided under MCA 23-1-110.
3. **Name of project:** Clark's Lookout State Park Road Paving
4. **Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):** Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is the project sponsor.
5. **If applicable:**
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: August 2004
Estimated Completion Date: August 2004
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 95%
6. **Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):** Clark's Lookout State Park is accessed by traveling north of Dillon on State Highway 91 North approximately 0.6 miles to Lover's Leap Road. The park was acquired in 1985 by warranty deed and is located in Beaverhead County, Montana; Township 7 South, Range 8 East, Section 7; total size is 7.23 acres.

Please refer to maps below for location and site plan.

Map showing location of Clark's Lookout State Park 0.6 miles north of Dillon, Montana.



Site Plan for Clark's Lookout State Park Paving project.



7. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>
Residential	<u>3</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation	<u>0</u>	Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas	<u>0</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
		Forestry	<u>0</u>
		Rangeland	<u>0</u>
		Other	<u>0</u>

8. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) **Permits:** permits would be filed at least 2 weeks prior to project start.

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
none	

(b) **Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
MFWP State Parks Highway Fund	\$65,000

(c) **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
Union Pacific	road easement
Beaverhead County Commissioners	road easement

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

The purpose of this proposal is to pave about one-quarter mile of road leading to Clark's Lookout State Park and a similar volume of road and parking area inside the park in late summer 2004. This project would provide easy access for visitors and area residents, provide safer and more efficient traffic flow and parking, reduce dust, and reduce short-term maintenance activities and costs.

FWP would provide funding from state park designated highway funds for the paving project and would administer contracts to complete road paving within the state park. Beaverhead County would be responsible for administering contracts and completing the paving project outside the park on Lover's Leap Road North. The projects would likely be implemented at the same time using the same contractor.

The subject roads will be improved and graveled through a prior project beginning in May, scheduled for completion in June 2004. If the proposed paving project is not selected, the gravel roads will be treated annually with magnesium chloride to abate dust at a current cost of about \$3,000 each year. No further design would be necessary to pave over the gravel roads; road base and drainage would be sufficient for paving.

Paving would eliminate the need for annual magnesium chloride treatment. Pavement has a life expectancy of about 20 years if chip-sealed one or two times during that period. Maintenance during that time is very low.

Calculating costs at the current rates provided, gravel roads treated with magnesium chloride annually would cost nearly the same amount over the course of twenty years (\$60,000 without inflation) as the initial cost of paving the roads (\$65,000 estimated).

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

- 1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

Alternative A: No Action

If no action is taken, the roads leading to and inside Clark's Lookout State Park would be good quality improved gravel roads which would be treated annually with magnesium chloride to abate dust.

Long-term (20 years) costs of applying magnesium chloride would about equal the costs of paving. Gravel roads would be less intrusive to the natural area and historical integrity of the site. The Clark's Lookout Management Planning Team preferred a medium level of development, which identified treated gravel roads, rather than a high level of development to "maintain a rustic and simple atmosphere".

Alternative B: Pave Lover's Leap Road North to park entrance: do not pave roads/parking areas inside park.

This alternative would reduce the largest source of dust caused by traffic using Lover's Leap Road North to access the park and adjacent residences. Roads in the park would remain gravel and be treated with magnesium chloride annually or less often, as needed. Dust from the park would travel to the neighboring area; though this is expected to be limited due to low traffic speeds.

Initial costs would be about half of the proposed alternative, or about \$30,000.

This historic park would retain slightly more of a rustic atmosphere with no paving directly below the lookout.

Alternative C: Do not pave Lover's Leap Road North to park entrance; pave roads and parking areas inside the park.

Under Alternative C, no further action would occur on Lover's Leap Road North, but the road and parking system inside the park would be paved. Traffic outside the park is expected to be the larger source of dust due to additional traffic between residences and slightly higher speeds than traffic in the park. Dust would drift from the approaching road to residences and the park.

Initial costs would be about half of the proposed paving project (Alternative D).

The aesthetics of a paved park, but gravel approach road would not coincide. This would have the feel of an urban park out of town.

Preferred Alternative D: Proposed Action

The proposed action would pave the entire route from the Highway 91 N to the park, including the interior park roads and parking areas. This action would prevent dust from disturbing visitors and neighbors.

Initial costs for paving are expected to be similar to costs incurred over twenty years for annual maintenance and magnesium chloride treatment of the subject gravel roads.

The upcoming Lewis and Clark Commemoration events and related emphasis to Clark's Lookout State Park is expected to generate an increase in visitation. Though the Management Planning Team did not suggest an overall high level of development, they did recognize the need for dust abatement. Other facets of a highly developed area are not being considered, such as high levels of interpretation, picnicking and grilling facilities, or a paved trail system.

This alternative was not considered in the 2002 Clark's Lookout State Park Improvements EA which proposed the gravel road improvement project, since funding was not available at that time, and it was considered part of the higher development package in the Management Plan. The issue of paving became a public concern recently during on-site planning and coordinating for the gravel road improvement project.

Note: a detailed evaluation of the Proposed Action is included in Part IV. Environmental Review Checklist beginning on page 8.

2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency.

The site improvements are designed to contain surface runoff in drainage ponds on-site, thus mitigating additional runoff created by hardened road surfaces.

Qualified professional applicators would perform paving operations and the project would be monitored by MFWP Design and Construction engineers and/or Beaverhead County to minimize the risk of petroleum product spills or accidents.

PART III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on the EA, the proposed action and alternatives:

- Two public notices in each of these papers: *Dillon Tribune*, *Montana Standard* (Butte), and the *Helena Independent Record*;
- One statewide press release;
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://MFWP.state.mt.us>.

Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having few minor impacts, many of which can be mitigated.

2. Duration of comment period, if any.

The public comment period will extend for thirty (30) days following the publication of the second legal notice in area newspapers. Written comments will be accepted until **5:00 p.m., May 21, 2004** and can be mailed to the address below:

Clark's Lookout Paving Draft EA
c/o Bannack State Park
4200 Bannack Road
Dillon, MT 59725

Or e-mailed to: bannack@montana.com

PART IV. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				1a.
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				1c.
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1a. The gravel roads are designed with adequate base and drainage to accommodate paving and will not alter soil stability or geologic substructure.

1c. Clark's Lookout is the unique geologic and physical feature being preserved at this site. Paving would occur on areas disturbed many years ago and recently improved for visitor access.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)			X positive			2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.)		NA				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a. Paving the gravel roads on Lover's Leap Road North and inside the park would reduce dust for visitors and many neighbors.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?			X positive			3a.
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X		yes	3b.
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		NA				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)		NA				
n. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3a. Paving the gravel roads would reduce sediment in surface runoff.

3b. Paving the gravel roads would create slightly greater amounts of surface runoff, however the site is designed to contain this runoff in drainage ponds between the roads and the railroad bed. Runoff would not flow into Beaverhead River.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X positive			4e.
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		NA				
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4e. If the roads are paved, magnesium chloride equipment would not visit the site annually; therefore, there would be less risk of weeds being transported to the park and becoming established. In addition, a sealed and hardened pavement surface would not allow weeds to become established. The roadsides would be monitored for weed growth by MFWP staff and if found, treated under the guidelines of the MFWP Region 3 Weed Management Plan and Beaverhead County Weed Board.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		NA				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		NA				
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish and Wildlife (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

As noted by MFWP Wildlife Biologist Gary Hammond in the 2002 Clark's Lookout State Park Improvements EA, November 2002, this area does not hold highly valuable habitat for wildlife. White-tailed deer pass through the area and there is some pocket habitat for small mammals or reptiles. Thicker willows along the Beaverhead River would not be impacted. Mr. Hammond did not anticipate significant impacts to the wildlife from the 2002 proposed gravel road and parking improvements. Mr. Hammond has moved to another position in the agency; Craig Fager, MFWP Wildlife Biologist based in Butte, is the consulting biologist until the Dillon position is filled. Sue Dalbey discussed the current gravel road improvement project and the proposed paving project with Mr. Fager on April 2, 2004. Mink, skunks or raccoons may inhabit the area and could be disturbed by visitor activity, though the paving project would not be expected to create any more disturbance than a park with improved gravel roads. He advised that the proposed paving project would not likely further impact wildlife species.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

MFWP Fisheries Biologist Dick Oswald does not anticipate impacts to the fisheries due to the proposed paving of gravel roads (personal communication with Sue Dalbey, April 2, 2004). This construction project would not alter fish habitat since it is not adjacent to the Beaverhead River. Drainage would be free of sediment and contained on site.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6a.
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Noise/Electrical Effects (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a. Noise levels would increase for about a week while equipment completes the paving process. Overall noise levels of vehicles using the roads are not expected to change if roads are paved.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?			X positive			7d.
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Use (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7d. Paving the road leading to the park would improve access to the area residences.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X		yes	8a.
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?			X positive			8c.
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8a. Paving the road could introduce risks of spilling petroleum products used in the process. Because construction would be completed by experienced professionals, this risk is very low. In addition, the project would be monitored by Beaverhead County officials and MFWP Design and Construction staff. Any spills would be cleaned up by the contractor.

8c. Paving the approach road and parking areas would allow more effective and safer traffic flows. Painted lines between two-way traffic and delineated parking spaces would reduce unsafe driving activities, for example large recreational vehicles driving in the middle of a gravel road, or vehicles parking in the thoroughfare. Paving would reduce dust levels, which would benefit people with breathing difficulties.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?			X			9b.
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X positive			9e.
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9b. Paving of Lover's Leap Road North would lead to the feeling of living in town or a subdivision, rather than a more rural setting. This is not expected to cause the relocation of residents.

9e. Traffic patterns would be safer if the roads are paved, due to the clear guidance of painted lines between two-way traffic and delineated parking.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			X positive			10a.
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?			X			10b.
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources						10e.
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						10f.
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. Paving the roads would reduce county and MFWP staff time spent on coordinating annual maintenance for grading treating gravel roads with magnesium chloride.

10b. Residential lots adjacent to the paved road may see a slight increase in property taxes due to the improved access, thus an increase would occur to the county tax revenue.

10e. No additional revenue would be collected as a result of the proposed paving project. Due to legislation passed in 2003, Montana residents do not pay a daily entrance fee to the park; out-of-state residents would pay a day use fee at Clark's Lookout, as they would at nearly all other Montana state parks.

10f. No short-term maintenance would be required on the paved roads. The roads would require chip-sealing and line painting one or two times over the 20-year "life expectancy" of the pavement.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?			X			11a.
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?			X			Please refer to 11a.
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Tourism Report not required.)			X positive			11c.
d. *** <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted?		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11a. Views looking toward the Lookout and viewsheds from the top of the Lookout would be changed by the proposed paving. Paving would create a more urban look and feel to this historically natural setting. Black pavement would be obtrusive among this lighter colored soil. The area, however, is already encroached with homes and roads. The County will also be paving Lover's Leap Road South in summer 2004, which travels through the south edge of the park and under the Lookout bluff. In addition, the railroad and Highway 91 North already present man-made alterations to the east viewshed. Interstate 15 and Lover's Leap Road South cross the south and west viewsheds. Residences and the town of Dillon alter viewsheds to the north, east and south; a large irrigation ditch passes the northwest side of the bluff.

11c. The quality of access to this site would be improved by paving the roads. Visitors with all sizes of recreational vehicles, including buses and large motor homes, would be able to easily access the park, turn around and exit.

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** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				12a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12a. MFWP had cultural resource specialist perform a cultural survey at the site on August 15, 2002. No cultural material was observed within the proposed project area. MFWP consulted with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which concurred that the road improvement project would be unlikely to disturb cultural or historic resources.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?			X		yes	13c.
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				Please refer to 13c.
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)		NA				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		NA				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Significance Criteria (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13c. The proposed paving deviates slightly from the "Medium Level of Development" proposed in the Clark's Lookout State Park Management Plan, 2002 and what was proposed in the Clark's Lookout State Park Improvements EA, November 2002. Gravel roads were approved under "Medium Level of Development" and Alternative C in the 2002 EA. Paved roads were considered as Alternative D in the EA within the "High Level of Development," which included a multitude of other development items not desired at the park at this time. To separate out the option of paving roads from the "High Level of Development" was not an alternative brought forward during scoping or public comment process. Paving was brought to agency attention during Spring 2004 site visits coordinating the gravel road construction and related discussions with neighbors. This subsequent action was not foreseen during the 2002 proposal, and would not set a precedent for future proposals at Clark's Lookout or other MFWP operated sites. In addition, paving equipment will be in Dillon for other projects during the 2004 summer, thus paving would be monetarily feasible.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PART V. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

This analysis did not reveal any significant impacts to the human or physical environment.

The proposed paving would surface roads already developed; therefore, would not alter the site's integrity, which is vital to its cultural and historic significance.

Paving the roads would enhance visitor access to the site and adjacent residences. Traffic flows would be safer with associated lines identifying traffic lanes and parking stalls. Air quality would improve after paving, thus addressing neighborhood concerns about dust created by increased traffic on Lover's Leap Road North and in the park.

The paving project would alter the aesthetics of the park and create a more urban feel to the neighborhood. Though this is not ideal for a site of such historical significance and potential interpretation, the proximity of Clark's Lookout to the town of Dillon makes pavement around the site inevitable in the long-term development of the area. Trends across Montana indicate subdivisions and urban sprawl will intensify around Clark's Lookout as people expand to "country living," yet want the associated amenities for easy access to town. A recent subdivision west of the park has instigated paving of Lover's Leap Road South by the county, and the old Highway 91N is paved, as well. Clark's Lookout is already bordered on three sides by roads and residences; therefore, the proposed paving is not considered a significant impact to the aesthetics of the site or the neighborhood.

PART VI. EA PREPARATION

- 1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.**

Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment under MEPA, this environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts from the proposed action; therefore, an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis.

- 2. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

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Independent Contractor
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406-443-8058

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MFWP
4200 Bannack Road
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406-834-3413

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MFWP
1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-3552

3. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Parks Division
Wildlife Division
Fisheries Division
Design & Construction Bureau

APPENDICES

- A. MCA 23-1-110 Project Exemption Form
- B. Clearance Letter – State Historic Preservation Office

file: Clks LO Paving Pre-Draft - sed 4/04/04; Clks LO Paving Draft - sed 4/19/04
form modification sed 04/04

APPENDIX A
23-1-110 MCA PROJECT EXEMPTION FORM
CLARK'S LOOKOUT STATE PARK ROAD PAVING

Use this form when a park improvement or development project meets the criteria identified in 12.8.602 (1) ARM, but determined to NOT significantly change park features or use patterns.

Project Location: Clark's Lookout State Park is accessed by traveling north of Dillon on State Highway 91 North (frontage road) approximately 0.6 miles to Lover's Leap Road. The park was acquired in 1985 by warranty deed and is located in Beaverhead County, Montana; Township 7 South, Range 8 East, Section 7; total size is 7.23 acres.

Description of Proposed Work: Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) proposes to pave these gravel roads: approximately one-quarter mile of Lover's Leap Road North from Highway 91N south to Clark's Lookout State Park and the loop road system with parking areas inside the park.

The improvement or development project does not significantly change park or fishing access site features or use patterns. Provide the reason for exemption across from the appropriate item.

12.8.602 (ARM) (1)	Reason for Exemption
(a) Roads/trails	no new nor over undisturbed land
(b) Buildings	none
(c) Excavation	none
(d) Parking	no new parking
(e) Shoreline alterations	none
(f) Construction into water bodies	none
(g) Construction w/impacts on cultural artifacts	No impact to historical or cultural resources
(h) Underground utilities	none
(i) Campground expansion	none

Some activities considered that do not significantly impact site features or use patterns are:
signing, fencing, barriers, road grading, garbage collection, routine latrine and facility maintenance.

Signature _____ Susan E. Dalbey _____ Date _____

If any of the above are checked, 23-1-110 MCA rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

APPENDIX B
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE CONCURRENCE
CLARK'S LOOKOUT STATE PARK ROAD PAVING